FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

21 MARCH 1985

Iran-Iraq War

Six people were killed on board an Iranian supply vessel during a missile attack on Iran's oil terminal at Khark Island, according to shipping sources cited by KUNA. Neither Iranian nor Iraqi media have reported the attack on Khark Island. An Iraqi military spokesman, in an announcement broadcast by Voice of the Masses radio, declared that an Iranian F-5 plane was shot down by Iraqi planes over Iranian territory north of Sanandaj on 20 March and reiterated the warning that Iranian airspace is considered an exclusion zone. Meanwhile, Tehran and Baghdad radios reported Iraqi planes attacked the Iranian cities of Tabriz, Hamadan and Dezful late on 20 March. Iran hit the Iraqi cities of Basra, Khanaqin, Mandali, Beydarvaz, Khurmal, and Sayyid Sadiq with artillery fire the same day, an Iranian military communique cited by Tehran radio maintained.

On the diplomatic front, India's Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi sent a high-level delegation to Baghdad and Tehran for talks aimed at stopping the Gulf war, Delhi radio disclosed. Prior to his delegation's departure for Baghdad, India's minister for external relations acknowledged that only "moral pressure" on behalf of India and the Nonaligned Movement can be used in the negotiations, the radio noted.

Lebanon

Phalangist Crisis — The Lebanese Forces suspended its rules for a 6-month transitional period following a 20 March meeting of the Lebanese Forces "emergency committee," Voice of Lebanon radio reported. The emergency committee was converted to an "executive committee" and Samir Ja'ja' was appointed as the Lebanese Forces chief of General Staff, the radio announced. Lebanese Prime Minister Rashid Karami, in comments broadcast by the radio, said the 20 March cabinet session issued the necessary instructions to the Lebanese Army to put an end to "current developments." Karami declared that the events in Sidon cannot be accepted or tolerated.

IDF, Lebanese Army Clash — Citing security sources, Beirut radio asserted that Israeli troops parachuted into 'Arab Salim and surrounding villages and, along with troops in military vehicles, established positions before moving north along two axes. The sources added that "violent fighting" raged between the Israeli forces and the Lebanese Army in the area.

Egypt

In response to an OAU invitation, Egypt decided to attend an Afro-Arab cooperation conference to be held in Libya, Cairo radio announced.

Israel on PLO-Jordan Agreement

The Israeli Prime Minister's Office announced that there has been "no change" in Israel's position rejecting negotiations between the United States and a Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, according to Jerusalem radio.

Pan-Arab Command Meeting

Libya's Staff Major 'Abd al-Salim Ahmad Jallud arrived in Damascus on 20 March for a meeting on the establishment of "strategic Arab unity" between Libya, Algeria, Syria, and the PDRY, according to JANA. Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam later held a quadripartite meeting with the Libyan, Algerian, and PDRY delegations, Damascus radio reported. The Algerian and PDRY foreign ministers attended the meeting, the radio noted.

DRA-Pakistan

The DRA Foreign Ministry demanded an immediate end to persistent aggression by the Pakistani Army and Pakistan's arming of "bandits" which infiltrate into Afghanistan, Kabul radio reported. The DRA Foreign Ministry noted that Pakistan will be responsible for the "dangerous consequences" if the aggression and armed interference continue. Pakistani charges of DRA bombings in the Arandu area were denied as "groundless allegations," the radio stated.

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Karmal Chairs Revolutionary Council Meeting

LD211007 Kabul BAKHTAR in English 0451 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Kabul, March 20, BAKHTAR — The second convocation of the Revolutionary Council for the current Afghan year ending March 20, 1985 was held here today under the chairmanship of Babrak Karmal, general secretary of the PDPA CC and president of the Revolutionary Council of the DRA.

The Revolutionary Council reviewed the activities of the Presidium of Revolutionary Council of the DRA, the socio-economic development plan of the DRA and the state budget for the new Afghan year beginning March 21, 1985 and the budgetary accomplishments in the outgoing Afghan year.

DRA Accuses Pakistan of Cross-Border Aggression

LD201946 Kabul Domestic Service in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] The charge d'affaires of the Pakistan Embassy in Kabul was summoned to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 1430 hours today, where the official in charge of the First Political Department stated the following to him:

According to reports by relevant DRA authorities, the persistent and irresponsible aggression of the Pakistani border forces, with the use of heavy weapons, is continuing in residential areas in various border regions of the DRA. As a result of these shellings, a number of old men, women, and children have been martyred. In particular, residential areas in the Barikowt region of Konarha Province have been the subject of these merciless attacks.

During the past few months the Pakistani Army committed 29 aggressions against the residential areas in Barikowt, as a result of which 12 people were martyred or wounded. In the course of 2 and 1/2 months of the current year heavy weapons such as explosiveshells, guns, mortars, and DSHK's have been fired some 34 times. Among these attacks, those of 19, 20, and 21 January and 5, 7, and 8 February were particularly severe and merciless. More recently, on 12, 13, and 14 March the Pakistani border force fired at Barikowt. As a result of these shellings during the past 4 months, 27 people were martyred and another 24 wounded.

Moreover, on 8 March at 1730, Pakistani agents attacked Afghanistan's Towr Kham border post with light weapons. And on 10 March, Towr Kham came under mortar and DSHK attack from 0610 to 1000, which resulted in the martyrdom of three and wounding of two people.

On 14 March, after heavy shelling, a 150-man group supported by the Pakistani Army attacked the control and passage area of Towr Kham and was repulsed by the DRA border army. As a result, a border staff member was killed and two others were wounded.

On 15 March an attack on two border posts at 1030 left three people martyred and four wounded.

The DRA authorities strongly condemn this persistent aggression by the Pakistan Army, the arming of bandits and infiltrating them onto Afghanistan soil for murder and subversion, and the direct cooperation of the Pakistani militia with these plundering and murderous bands, and lodge a strong protest against the government of Pakistan.

In addition, they demand that the Pakistani authorities put an immediate end to these aggressions and armed interference which have endangered peace and security on the borders. Otherwise the dangerous and heavily responsible consequences will rest with the Pakistani military authorities.

According to another report, the official responsible for the First Political Section told the charge d'affaires of Pakistan: In order to conceal their hostile actions, the Pakistani authorities, in line with their past and groundless allegations, recently claimed once again that on 14 March at 0910 four Afghan aircraft entered 3 km inside Pakistani airspace, dropped four bombs in the Arando area, and fired rockets, all of which caused no damage.

Similarly the Pakistan authorities alleged that at 1120 on the same day four Afghan aircraft and two helicopters penetrated 1 km into Pakistani territory, dropped a bomb on the Arando region, and fired several rockets, as a result of which an Afghan nomad and a Pakistani were killed.

After investigation and assessment, the DRA relevant authorities find these claims to be a groundless and motivated accusation, refute them resolutely, and demand that the Pakistan Government put an end to such lies and fabrications, which result in nothing but aggravation of the situation on the borders of both countries.

Mujahidin Kill 15 DRA Troops, Down 2 Helicopters

LD192239 Riyadh SPA in English 1930 GMT 19 Mar 85

[Text] Islamabad, March 19, SPA — Nearly 15 Kabul Regime's soldiers were killed during mujahideen's attack on Soviet-Afghan troops in (Panjwai) village of Qandhar town, Western diplomatic sources said here today.

During the attack on February 20 in Qandhar, the mujahideen also shot down two Soviet helicopters, the sources said.

They added a large Soviet-Afghan force last week carried out a pre-emptive strike over mujahideen positions in Paghman valley near Kabul, causing heavy civilian casualties.

The sources said two huge explosions rocked Kabul city last Saturday. In retaliation two days later, Soviet helicopters bombed surrounding suburbs destroying many houses, they said.

The sources added that Soviet choppers bombed mujahideen positions in (Chehel-Sutoon) on south-western side of Kabul, but by mistake killed 30 militiamen of the Afghan Interior Ministry.

Ershad Comments on Elections, Foreign Relations

HK201008 Hong Kong AFP in English 0950 GMT 20 Mar 85

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Text] Dhaka, March 20 (AFP) — Military ruler Lieutenant General Hussain Mohammed Ershad today said he might try again to return Bangladesh to democracy, as voters geared for a referendum on his rule tomorrow.

"I am still willing to make another try" to hold a general election, he told AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. But he ruled out political freedom if it would mean a slide into anarchy.

He regretted that opposition parties had refused to take part in four proposed general elections last year and this year. All were cancelled after the opposition announced a boycott, saying the elections would not be free.

Analysts said the 55-year-old ruler, looking relaxed on the golf course today, was likely to win approval for his three year rule in tomorrow's referendum.

"I am willing to make another try after the referundum.... To start with I will hold elections for the sub-district councils and then depending on the stand of the opposition political parties I will go for a parliamentary poll," he said.

Lt.-Gen. Ershad, who abolished parliament when he seized power and has ruled without it ever since, called the referundum on March 21 when he cancelled the latest proposed general election, which had been planned for next month.

At the same time he reimposed martial law provisions that in recent months had been relaxed, banned political activities and imposed censorship.

Some 40 million voters have been urged to flock to 90,000 booths for tomorrow's confidence vote.

"Golf is my second love," said the 18 handicap player, complaining that his duties prevented him playing every day and urging on his fellow players.

"Tell me what should be the priority in our country...hollow speeches by so-called political leaders or succour to the people?" he asked.

Opposition parties, who number over 72 and range from the extreme right to the left, insist they want elections to be held under a neutral government and not under military rule.

"But the country can not afford to go through a vaccuum, we can not stand another turmoil," one of his aides said.

"If I don't win I will have no right to run the government," the president said, while sipping black coffee after his game.

Turning to international relations, he said that under his rule Bangladesh had consolidated ties with all its partners.

"We have excellent relations with the United States, the Islamic world and European countries," he said.

He added he was certain that various outstanding issues with India could be solved easily.

The sharing of water from the River Ganges is the main dispute pending between the two governments, analysts said.

Ties with Moscow had seen some problems but were now settling down "and I see no reason why the relations will not improve, God willing," he said.

Listing his priorities, he said: "It will be a war on the economic front.... We will win the war against poverty as we have done against divisive forces."

In recent speeches he has accused opposition parties of seeking to divide the country.

Population control was another priority, he said. Bangladesh, with some 100 million people, has the world's highest birth rate and if it is not checked the population could rise to some 130 million by the turn of the century.

"Our people in the villages just want two square meals, education for their children and clothes to wear...they do not care for politics," he said.

He said he was in total control of the country's 91,300-strong armed forces. The army had understood what the public wanted and would give it to them, he added.

"Give me peace, I will give you progress," was his message to his countrymen, the general said as an attendant came to help him take off his golf shoes.

'Brisk' 'Peaceful' Polling Reported in Referendum

BK210723 Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0700 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Excerpt] Brisk polling is reported from all over the country in the referendum. The voting, which started at 0800 [0200 GMT] in the morning, is continuing in a peaceful and disciplined atmosphere. The people have been casting the votes with great enthusiasm. The voting will continue till 1700 in the afternoon without any break. Four crore 90 lakh voters are expected to exercise their right of franchise in the referendum.

Delhi Says Troops Deployed

BK210325 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Bangladesh goes to the polls today for a referendum to decide the continuance of President Ershad. The voting started this morning, and it will end at 1630 [as heard] in the evening. The initial results are expected tonight, and the final results are likely to be announced tomorrow.

Meanwhile, troops have been deployed all over Bangladesh to prevent any violence during the polling. Opposition leaders have called for a general strike and boycott of the referendum. The referendum will be the third since May 1977.

AFP Reports on Polling

HK210432 Hong Kong AFP in English 0418 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Excerpt] Dhaka, March 21 (AFP) — Polling opened here today in the referundum which President Hussain Mohammed Ershad has called on his three-year-old military rule and policies, an election commission official said.

The official said that early voting had been "peaceful".

Over 40 million voters are elligible to cast their yes or no ballots in over 90,000 polling booths.

The 55-year-old president, who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1982, announced the referendum on March 1 after postponing national polls slated for April 6 in the face of a proposed opposition boycott.

He also tightened martial law, imposed press censorship and banned political activities.

The government today told two top opposition leaders that they were free to vote in the referendum.

Hasina Wajed, who heads the 15-party alliance and Khalida Zia who leads a seven party group were put under house arrest on March 1, and their movements restricted.

Informed sources said the two women would not vote as they had earlier called for a boycott of the referendum.

President Ershad was expected to cast his vote during the morning.

Briefs

New Microwave Link — A new microwave link is being set up between Dhaka and Chittagong to improve the communication system, including the transmission of television programs. It will replace the old one and is expected to be completed by August this year. It will have three microwave links with each of 1,800 channels. Television will be given a separate radio link after the new microwave system is set up. At present, a 960-channel system microwave is working between Dhaka and Chittagong with an alternative system of another preventive [as heard] microwave of 960 channels. [Excerpt] [*Dhaka Domestic Service in English 0110 GMT 20 Mar 85 BK*]

Soviet Diplomat Shot in New Delhi 21 March

BK210843 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0838 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] A Soviet diplomat was shot at by some unidentified persons in New Delhi around midday today. The diplomat has been rushed to the hospital. According to agency reports, the incident occurred when the car in which the diplomat and his wife were traveling was shot at by two assailants in the diplomatic area of Chanakyapuri. The assailants escaped on a motorcycle.

Gandhi Conveys Concern on Gulf War Escalation

BK210940 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] The prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, has expressed India's concern at the serious escalation of hostilities between Iran and Iraq. Making a statement in both the Houses of Parliament today, he said the hostilities have now been extended by the two countries to the civilian areas and civilian installations, and direct attacks on the capitals. There are also allegations of the use of chemical weapons. Mr Gandhi said it was his endeavor to persuade the two warring nations having traditional and friendly ties with India to cease hostilities and resolve their differences through peaceful negotiations. He said a high-level delegation has been sent to both Iran and Iraq in a bid to achieve an end to the hostilities. The delegation, comprising the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan, and the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandar, has already arrived in Baghdad. The prime minister pointed out that the Indian delegation will express grave concern of India and the Nonaligned Movement to Iran and Iraq. It will try to persuade the leaders of the two countries to cease hostilities. Mr Gandhi expressed the hope that Iran and Iraq would agree to the proposal to stop attacking civilian areas and civilian ships and go in for exchange of prisoners of war. He said probably some outside forces do not want peace and stability in the region.

In the Rajya Sabha, members from all sides congratulated the prime minister on his decision to send a high-level delegation to Iran and Iraq. Replying to queries from members, Mr Gandhi said about 400 Indians are reportedly affected by the escalation of Iran-Iraq hostilities. He said since no civilian aircraft could land at Tehran Airport, an Air India plane has been kept in readiness to pick up the Indians as soon as they reach either Ankara or some other nearest place. Replying to another question, the prime minister said India is in constant touch with the Swedish prime minister who is coordinating the effort being made by the UN secretary general to secure an end to the hostilities.

In Baghdad, the high-level Indian delegation led by the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan, is meeting the Iraqi president, Mr Saddam Husayn, today in an effort to end the Gulf war. Mr khan has already held detailed discussions with the Iraqi foreign minister, Mr Tariq 'Aziz. He was assisted in the talks by the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari, and other members of the delegation. The AIR [All India Radio] special correspondent reports from Baghdad that the new initiative of Mr Rajiv Gandhi as the chairman of the Nonaligned Movement has been welcomed by both sides. The Indian delegation will later go to Tehran for discussions with the Iranian leaders.

Mr Gandhi said he has no plans of calling special session of the Nonaligned Movement to discuss the Gulf war. But the nonaligned ministerial meeting which is scheduled to meet sometime next month in New Delhi, might discuss the Iran-Iraq war. The prime minister said it is difficult to say what the response to Indian efforts would be. He assured the Rajya Sabha that he would keep the House informed as he received any information from the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan, and the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari.

Foreign Secretary on Mission to Iran, Iraq

BK201615 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Excerpts] The prime minister has sent a high-level delegation to Baghdad and Tehran in a fresh bid to stop the escalating war between Iran and Iraq. The delegation, comprising the minister of state for external affairs, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan, and the foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari, left New Delhi this afternoon for Baghdad by a special plane. After their discussions with the Iraqi leaders, they will proceed to Tehran. Talking to reporters at Delhi before his departure, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan said they would try to persuade the Iranian and Iraqi leaders to end their mutually destructive war.

The foreign secretary, Mr Romesh Bhandari, pointed out that India has historical ties and relations of friendship with both Iran and Iraq. Geographically also it is very close to the area of conflict and has an additional responsibility as the head of the Nonaligned Movement. He said these three factors put a special responsibility on New Delhi to see that peace is restored between the two member nations of the Nonaligned Movement speedily. Asked what further steps India will take after the mission has visited Baghdad and Tehran, Mr Bhandari said that that will be decided in the light of the outcome of their talks in the two capitals. The Iranian deputy foreign minister, Mr 'Ali Mohammad Besharati, who has to come to New Delhi as President Khamene'i's special envoy, told a news conference today that he placed Iran's viewpoint before the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, and he had expressed concern over the grave situation. Mr Besharati said Iran is prepared to stop bombing Iraqi cities provided Iraq refrains from bombing Iranian civilian targets. The two countries had come to an agreement in June last on avoiding attacks on each others civilian areas, and Iran is prepared to abide by it provided Iraq also does the same. He also announced Iran's willingness to release crippled and disabled Iraqi prisoners unilaterally. Meanwhile, during a brief halt in Dubayy, the leader of the Indian delegation, Mr Khurshid Alam Khan, told our Gulf correspondent, Prem Chand Arya, that the present move by India and the prime minister, Mr Rajiv Gandhi, is not meant to be a substitute for any effort by any other international organization or movement to bring the present war to an end. The delegation has since left Dubayy for Baghdad.

Yaqub Khan Elected to Senate Seat 21 Mar

BK210835 Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu 0800 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] The National Assembly, which is today electing three Senate members from the Federal Capital Area, has already elected Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan to one of these seats. Some 212 out of 227 members present in the house voted for him. The election process for the remaining two seats is continuing. Radio Pakistan's representative says 17 candidates are contesting the election.

Earlier, when the National Assembly resumed its session in Islamabad this morning, the women members of the National Assembly, who were elected yesterday, took their oaths and then signed their names in the register, thus becoming regular members of the National Assembly. The chief election commissioner, Justice S.A. Nusrat, administered the oath to them. Earlier, congratulating the women members, he said their election has marked the completion of the formation of the National Assembly. He said the Senate election will be completed after the election of three senators from the Federal Capital Area in today's National assembly session. This will mark the formation of the Majlis-I-Shoora [Federal Advisory Council], which will consist of the National Assembly and the Senate. The chief election commissioner said the conduct of free, impartial, and fair elections and people's enthusiastic participation in them have marked the beginning of the restoration of the era of democracy in the country.

NAWA-E WAQT Editorial on Relations With USSR

GF191702 Lahore NAWA-E WAQT in Urdu 17 Mar 85 p 3

[Editorial: "It Is Good To Be Optimistic, But One Must Also Be Realistic"]

[Excerpts] Commenting on his meeting with Mikhail Gorbachev, President General Mohammad Ziaul Haq has said that if the two parties, that is Pakistan and the Soviet Union, exercise restraint, goodwill, and understanding on the Afghanistan issue, then differences can be eliminated and an acceptable compromise could be worked out between them.

He said this on his return to Islamabad from Moscow in answer to the queries of correspondents. He spoke of Mr Gorbachev as a dynamic and energetic person who would instill a new trend of thought in the Soviet leadership.

The situation created by the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan has left Pakistan with only one recourse: to seek a political solution. Pakistan has the support of the United Nations and international organizations such as the Nonaligned Movement and the ICO, and this is a source of assurance for Pakistan. The peaceful political solution of this issue is, however, in the hands of the Soviet Union and their whims.

The Soviet Union continues to proclaim its stance that a political solution must be sought under the aegis of the United Nations through the Geneva talks as "a step in the right direction" while simultaneously exerting pressure on Pakistan and leveling accusations and making a routine of border and air violations which seem to be waxing daily.

After his talks with new Soviet leader Mr Gorbachev, President Ziaul Haq has returned with the certainty and assurance that the Soviet Union supports seeking a political solution under the auspices of the United Nations. But at the same time, the Soviet Union said in unison with its puppet Babrak Karmal that foreign powers (meaning Pakistan) are interfering in Kabul.

Every Pakistani would like to see the optimistic sentiments aired by President Ziaul Haq on his return from Moscow regarding the new Soviet leadership materialize, but a more realistic approach would be to not be diffident but to adopt a more realistic attitude and we should not labor under false delusions. It has been the Soviet tradition that once it enters a country it never leaves it, which is the reason why the Soviet Union is the world's greatest aggressor this era. Hence, the only course of action open to us is to remain always vigilant against the wrath and pressure of the Soviet Union and forge greater international unity so that Pakistan's Afghan policy is not considered the policy of the government only but also of the people. The Afghan mujahidin cannot obtain any assistance from outside and their only contact with the outside world is through Iran or Pakistan. Due to the war with Iraq, or other causes, the path to Iran is closed, which is the reason why Pakistan is the target of Soviet pressure, threats and accusations. Even if Pakistan attempts to provide assurances that the mujahidin's struggle is their's alone, the Soviet Union will continue to accuse and intimidate Pakistan. We can only combat this state of affairs by strengthening our defenses and promoting internal national unity.

SRI LANKA

Prime Minister Premadasa on Indian Help

BK201515 Delhi General Overseas Service in English 1330 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] The Sri Lankan prime minister, Mr Premadasa, has said Indian leaders have always extended help to his country during times of crisis, which has benefited Sri Lanka. He was speaking at a ceremony in Colombo yesterday at which the Indian high commissioner, Mr S.J. Chatwal, presented 30 Tripatakas [collections of the precepts of Buddha] in Hindi and Pali to the Buddhist Academy of Sri Lanka. Recalling the greatness of Emperor Asoka, Mr Premadasa said the great Indian king conquered Lankan hearts through the message of Buddhism. Mr Chatwal said close Indo-Lankan friendship is due to many factors and Buddhism is one of them.

Meanwhile, 200 Tamil youth detained as suspected militants in the island state are to be freed soon. This was stated by a Sri Lankan Security Ministry official in Colombo today. He said the decision was taken after a visit to the detention camp by the national security minister, Mr Lalith Athulathmudali.

Security Minister Comments on Helicopter Attack

BK201327 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1245 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] The government today strongly denied a claim by Indian-based Tamil separatist group that it shot down an Air Force helicopter yesterday.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali said that it was totally untrue that militants from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam [LTTE] group had downed a helicopter, which according to a LTTE release, to the [words indistinct]. The minister said it was utter rubbish. One of our helicopters spotted a boat in the northern waters of Point Pedro yesterday. The terrorists opened fire at the helicopter trying to damage it. The crew fired back, and the boat turned back [words indistinct] away.

Mr Athulathmudali added that the helicopter withdrew when the boat, which had come from the direction of India, returned to the Indian waters. Official sources told the SLBC [Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation] that a number of terrorists in the boat were wounded in the return fire. No security personnel was wounded.

Army Reserves Called Up for Active Service

BK201342 Colombo Domestic Service in English 1245 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] All members of the voluntary reserve of the Sri Lanka Army have been called out on active service by proclamation in gazette extraordinary, [words indistinct] of 30 November 84. All such members who have not reported as yet are required to report to their units.

Air Force Patrol, 'Terrorist' Boat Exchange Fire

BK201055 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] A Sri Lanka Air Force aircraft on patrol detected a boat carrying several terrorists a few miles to the north of Sri Lanka coast heading toward the island.

A terrorist in the boat had fired at the aircraft when it flew low to scrutinize the occupants.

The aircraft had returned fire causing heavy casualties to the terrorists and damaging the boat. No injuries were caused to the Air Force personnel.

The boat later fled into the Indian territorial waters.

Security Forces Arrest 8 Women 'Terrorists'

BK171105 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 17 Mar 85

[Text] Security forces have arrested eight women terrorists in the eastern province. Official sources said that the women were rounded up in a town in the east on Friday.

Meanwhile, the body of a woman shot dead by guerrillas and tied to a lamp post had been found at Vavuniya.

Textile shops in Jaffna are closed as a mark of protest against the kidnapping of two Tamil textile merchants.

Official sources told the SLBC [Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation] that the kidnappers had made a ransom demand for 20 million rupees.

Briefs

Tamil Drug Trafficking Arrests — At least 60 Sri Lankan Tamils have been arrested in Italy and accused of selling drugs to raise money for Tamil secessionist groups. According to police sources in France, warrants have been issued for the arrest of 94 Sri Lankan Tamils alleged to have been implicated in the drug trafficking involving 5 billion lira. Police from an antidrug squad and the customs police arrested the immigrants during the past week in an operation that is still continuing. Most of the immigrants worked as domestic servants or in restaurants in Rome. Italian reporters, who were briefed on the operation, said investigations revealed that the narcotics network supplied by the Sri Lankans had links in France, West Germany and Poland. [Excerpt] [*Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 20 Mar 85 BK*]

Khomeyni Greets Iranian Nation on New Year
GF201840 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1611 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Speech by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeyni to Iranian nation on occasion of Iranian new year — recorded; date, place not given]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

My blessings to all the Muslims of the world at the start of the new year, to the different strata of people, to those who are at the battlefronts, and the families of the martyrs. In short, my congratulations to all of you. God willing, this year will be a blissful year for all the Muslim world and God Almighty, may the hands of the superpowers and all their adherents be severed so the people may once again live in peace. It is all the doing of these big powers who say they are working for peace, but in actual fact they drag the nations into bloodshed and then claim that we cannot preserve human rights. This claim that they make has no basis. In fact the evidence is quite against it and the fact is that they live in oblivion. They are unaware of the lessons to be learned from the rest of the world. The struggle that occured in Iran may prove to be good for all the Muslim nations.

All Islamic countries of the world should join with each other against all these crimes that are perpetrated against humanity. If it happens that problems can be solved but [word indistinct] I do not know how matters will be resolved. I am hopeful, however, that the great God will give us strength and fortitude. Today fortitude is needed. The holy prophet had also been worried over whether the people would be able to take it or not. So much so that according to tradition, when the prophet said that the sura of Hud [Koran sura] turned my hair white he was referring to the verse: Remain steadfast as you have been commanded and do not follow their vain desires. Such verses have also appeared in several other chapters of the Koran. One can say the verse that described the situation was revealed because the prophet was apprehensive lest his people, God forbid, lose fortitude.

The people of Iran, the army of Iran, the guards of Iran, the Government of Iran, all the (?tribes) of Iran should note that steadfastness against the tyranny of the superpowers is a matter that has been ordained. This means steadfastness in the face of the armies. It has been ordered that all should stand fast. If you stand fast you will win. By the grace of God Iran in this particular trait is more well endowed than many others. And I cannot forget the Friday that passed with such glory, spirituality, and steadfastness. The people stood with fortitude in the face of those dangers. I had been at that time thinking and worrying. I was especially noting the condition of the people. I never saw even one person who faltered. When the Friday imam was speaking with calm strength, the people heard him with the same calm strength and shouted that they had come for martyrdom. They spoke of a number of persons who had been martyred, that they had willed to be martyred, and were in fact martyred.

How can anyone stand in the face of such a nation, a nation that has such qualities? On the day it was announced they would bombard the Friday prayers even more people came to the prayers. Even those who did not usually come for Friday prayers in the past did come this particular week. What a nation this is: Such a nation cannot be cowed or scared by bombardments or distracted by intrigues. In fact there is nothing here by which to be distracted. There is an Islam, that is a sacred trust of God in your hand. It is an Islam that has from the beginning nurtured and grown strong through hardships and hard work. It gains strength with every setback. The prophet of Islam, from the very beginning when he invited the people to Islam until his last days, had been in a state of war. Even when he was resting he remained mobilized for war. And all those hardships that he had seen, he had seen firsthand.

Similar hardships were seen by other Muslims and the imams. As those hardships were endured for the sake of Islam they seemed sweet to their taste. We should also try to acquire the same taste so that the hardships taste sweet to us too. This is the meaning of being satisfied with the will of God. At certain times one has no option but to submit to the will of God. However, man has been asked to be content with the will of God. Here it makes no difference whether what he decrees is a calamity or whether it is a bounty. The faithful follower will regard all of these as a bounty because they are all for Him, they are all from our Beloved. If a beloved one, even if an earthly beloved one asks for something which is unpleasant, that will seem sweet to the person who loves him. If we can attain such a state — I hope we will endeavor to attain such a state so that we will enjoy such things. Right now, when our young men go to the fronts they go for martyrdom because this tastes sweet to them, because they view this as coming from God.

Since they consider it a duty from God, it becomes easy for them. We should train ourselves in a way that we should consider everything as coming from God. Whatever comes from God is good because God at times tests his people. At times a calamity becomes a blessing. At other times what we consider a blessing is in fact a calamity. The great God wants to groom the people. Those who turn to God are sometimes tested by pressures while at other times they are tested by abundance. It is under pressure that the spirits soar to the higher world. It happens under pressure. Therefore we can say that by the grace of God our nation is also like this. They are not afraid of hardships. If we Muslims, in fact all the Muslims, were like other nations, and had been running after wealth, status, and such things, or were running for bread or sex, many would have been disappointed. But the nation which goes to war for martyrdom, a nation whose men are lovers of martyrdom and wish for martyrdom, such a nation can hardly think of anything else. As for its economy, it does not matter. These matters are for those who are tied to economies. The people who work for anything, that the prices be less or more, are very different from the nation that wishes for martyrdom. When one is determined to attain martyrdom he is not supposed to worry about the price. He does not go to collect booty because through martyrdom he gains a booty that never dwindles. It never breaks. It is something which is not rewarded by anyone but the hand of God. And our nation is doing exactly this. I hope that all are of such kind. Of course, I may not be like that but I hope others will be so. I myself would also like to be like that. All of us should become like that. We hope that this new year will bring us good.

I wish to stress the fact that we do not wish at all for even our enemies to suffer any harm. If they are Muslims and do not

oppose Islam, we have nothing against them. We do not want to destroy economic centers in Iraq. We do not even want to see them weakened. If Saddam did not do such things, our government would not do them either. However, when he commits such acts we have no other option, and the nation and the government have no other option.

We should remember that we never began the war. Even now we do not want war. Afterward, we will not want war. However, we also do not want a peace that is worse than war. We want the world to know this corrupt person who has done so much corruption and not allow him to repeat what he has done. However, the world is thinking that such a person can be preserved for such work by creating similar conditions in the future for the annihilation of Islam. All their pain stems from the fact that they find us adhering to Islam. Islam does not tolerate such crimes and sins. Because they are afraid of Islam and Saddam has also stood against Islam, therefore they are afraid of His future. However if the great God wills, all their crimes will return to them We believe that in the face of this force we must stand against who has harmed us and we should hit him in the mouth. If the world does not accept this fact the war will continue, and this is a war for which they are responsible. It is not our war. And the bombings of such targets is also their work. You come and hit our Friday prayers. By doing so, you think that our nation will retreat. However, this matter has been proved by history.

It is something which one cannot believe unless one has seen it. A woman is holding her baby in her arms. A man is sitting next to his child, yet none of them move. Despite all that pressure no one makes a move. On the one hand, there is an explosion caused by those cowards and on the other hand there are the bombings which you have all witnessed. Nevertheless, all of them are sitting in their places in complete serenity. Our nation is such a nation. This nation does not worry about meat prices or whether it is more or less in quantity. This is a nation that follows Islam. As the prophet of Islam said, we hope that Islam will gain strength.

For example, a man is killed, his son is killed, they died; the children were taken prisoners [referring to the Kerbala incident]. It is said in history that as the day of Ashoora was approaching, the great martyr [Imam Hoseyn] became happier because he had his eye on God and not on other matters. He was attached to God and was not worrying about his son or such things.

Therefore we must stand fast because this was the very worry of the prophet when he was thinking lest his people should lose faith and disobey God. We should not let such a worry happen in our case.

I pray to the great God that he may preserve our wounded, martyrs, their families, and all of us and may He reward our martyrs. Those others He may keep whole and give them victory. God willing, our POW's may return to their families and our nation may go forward with strength. It should not worry about trifles. It has been proven that if a nation wants to remain independent and alert it should be steadfast. If we wish to be abject then we should come to terms with America and all these issues will be over and the war will come to an end. If we become allies of the Soviet Union, again all these issues will be over. However, in that case, we will remain a backward, down-trodden, and weak nation forever. However, if a nation wishes to walk tall and have some value it should not worry about trifles. If we worry about trifles then we well lose hope. But we can see, thank God, that our nation is not like that. I hope that it will get stronger. I hope that our nation will be happy in the new year. May God Almighty bestow strength and good health to all. May he awaken all of us and help us to remain steadfast. May God's peace and blessings be upon you.

President Khamene'i Presents New Year Message

LD202144 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1634 GMT 20 Mar 85

[New Year message from President Seyyed 'Ali Khamene'i, date and place not given — recorded]

[Text] In the Name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.

May the Now-Ruz festival and the beginning of the season of growth and blossoming be plessed and happy for the dear, illustrious imam, [words indistinct], our sisters and brothers, particularly the warriors on the battlefronts, the sentinels of the nation's honor and independence, of the country's borders and the prestige of the revolution, also for you dear families of the martyrs, the self-sacrificers, the missing and war wounded, for you who have been disabled by the imposed war, and for all those who are participating in the great movement of this nation in confronting world arrogance! I hope that you will spend every single moment of the New Year, by the grace of God, enjoying the unending blessings of God so much so that life will become happier and more joyous. May God Almighty grant you success in your life!

The year we leave behind was one of efforts and resistance. Apart from the fact that new pressures were brought to bear on us in the economic fronts thanks to the plans of world arrogance and apart from the drought in certain parts of the country which created other problems, on the political-military front, too, which is our other problem, the plots [words indistinct] continued all the time. However, by the grace of God Almighty, we were able to overcome all these problems.

Our assessment today proves to us that on the political front, by expanding our political endeavors in the international arena and by our presence and constant activity; on the economic front by saving, by our innovation, by seeking new programs and opening up intractable roads; on the military front with the mobility and courage of our combatants and their intrepid families, particularly with the resounding slap administered by our nation these last few days in the face of the Baghdad palace dwellers — everywhere victory was ours.

Of course the merciless bombing of the cities, expressing the nature and spirit of the Baghdad regime, has brought mourning to a great many families, but our nation has shown that both in the phase of fortitude and resistance and in the bearing of calamities, as well as in the era of retaliating in kind, we enjoy greater power and might in confronting our enemies.

Of course, all victories come from God, and we will never be conceited over our victories in the political, cultural, and military arenas. Rather, we think that we should all prepare ourselves even more on all fronts. With the state of affairs we face in the new year we should prepare our Islamic nation so that in this new year we have all the preliminaries of progress and blossoming and success made ready within ourselves more than ever before.

To begin with, unity, sincerity, and cooperation among the people should be continued in a daily increasing manner. Also, mutual sincerity and cooperation should be established between the people and government officials.

Second, in all arenas the people should preserve the cooperation they have enjoyed so far which has opened the knots in all the country's problems. In view of the imam's recent repeated emphasis on the people's participation in the economic arenas, they should make this participation even more active and efficient. The responsible officials of the Islamic Republic, too, should prepare the groundwork and capabilities for such participation.

Third, constructive economic effort, particularly in the agricultural field, should continue, for we need it, and should acquire greater acceleration and power. Last year, just as we expected, there were certain movements toward progress and self-sufficiency in the agricultural field, but in this particular field, the most important production field in the country, we have a long way to go. Both in this field and in the area of industrial production we should continue the overall constructive effort and, indeed, in order to be able to carry out their duties in all fields and preserve the independence of the revolution, the people should avoid excesses of any type, whether they involve finances, manpower, or wasting and frittering away precious time and opportunities. We should appreciate the value of all divine favors placed at the disposal of our nation and we should make the maximum and best use of all these.

I hope that the year ahead will be happy and heart-warming for you and that at the end of this year the balance sheet shows that we have all taken long strides toward reaching the aspirations of the revolution, particularly toward reviving its fundamental slogans such as the slogan on Islam, obtaining Islamic rules, and the slogan on protecting the meek and on a profound cultural change among the people. Thus, God willing, we will be carrying out these slogans!

I hope that God Almighty will make this festival and this year blessed and auspicious for all of you! May peace and God's mercy and benedictions be upon you!

Minister Velayati Returns, Comments on Visits

LD211205 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] Mr Velayati, the minister of foreign affairs, who went to Libya, Algeria, and Syria to submit messages from President Khamene'i to the leaders of those countries and to explain the latest developments in the imposed war and the violation of international regulations by the Iraqi regime, returned to Tehran last night. In an interview with our correspondent, the foreign minister talked about the results of these visits, to which we draw your attention:

[Begin recording] [unidentified reporter] Mr Velayati, please tell us what discussions you had during your visits to Syria, Libya, and Algeria and what were the results of these discussions.

[Velayati] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. The aim of this visit was, in fact, to explain to friendly and close countries the recent developments connected with the imposed war and the shelling of our residential areas by the Iraqi regime, and the violations of the agreement which was signed and accepted by the Islamic Republic and Iraq on refraining from bombing residential and nonmilitary targets. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has sent a number of delegations to various countries and international organizations to explain its positions.

In view of the importance that we attach to our relations with those three countries which you mentioned, I personally visited those three countries. As I said earlier, we had two aims in these visits: The first aim is a general one which also applied to other countries; namely to let them know how Iraq has violated its own agreement with the UN and how it has violated international conventions, and that we merely resorted to retaliatory action as a preventative measure. What is certain, as the esteemed chairman of the Supreme Defense Council said, is that the Islamic Republic of Iran is not in favor of attacking residential areas, unless our country is forced to resort to such acts. And we have shown that if we decide to do such things we have adequate strength and power to attack the most sensitive parts of Iraq with our missiles and aerial bombardments or bombardments by artillery units from the Armed Forces of Islam.

The special aim behind this visit to those countries was to exchange views on recent developments in connection with the conspiracies which are implemented in the region against the progressive and combative nations. One aspect of these conspiracies is the formation of the Cairo, Amman, Baghdad axis. Their combined efforts seek to gather all the countries which support Zionism and which are, in fact, American lackeys around this axis, and to prevent any movement in the region against the interests of Zionism and arrogant powers. The presence of the head of the Egyptian Government and the King of Jordan next to the head of the Iraqi Government in Baghdad clearly demonstrated to which wing and to which axis the imposed war belongs. Under such conditions, it is natural for us to hold discussions with our friends and allies in the region. This is something which we have always done, whether in connection with the war against Iraq, or in connection with the developments in Lebanon, North Africa, or the Persian Gulf.

In view of rapid developments which often take place in this sensitive part of the world, these meetings should take place more than ever. During my trips, in view of the message of His Excellency Mr Khamene'i to the leaders of those countries, and in view of detailed and important discussions which we had with them, we have achieved good results which will certainly have a decisive influence on the future of the region and the struggle of the progressive countries. [end recording]

Montazeri Suggests Clergy, Students Visit Front

LD201216 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] In this morning's religious class Grand Ayatollah Montazeri, referring to the self-sacrifices and heroism of the fighters of Islam on the fronts, expressing his gratitude to them and announcing that there will be no classes during the next week [during the New Year Holidays], said: At every possible opportunity the dear combatants of Islam should be visited and they should be thanked in person for their great work. Now, when classes will be closed for more than 10 days, it would be useful if religious students and the instructors make use of this opportunity to visit the fronts; and while thanking the beloved fighters and praising them for the self-sacrifice, heroism, martyrdom and efforts which they make for the sake of the protection of Islam and the defense of the Holy Koran and the country, they should also pay adequate attention to the ideological and religious needs of the fronts. As in the past, they should try to propagate religious issues and Islamic precepts among the beloved combatants on the fronts. He added: The fighters do not expect clerical brothers to go to the frontlines of the war and take up arms. What they expect from religious students and clergymen is care of the religious aspects and propogation of religious precepts on the fronts.

At the end, the Grand Ayatollah Montazeri prayed for the final victory of the fighters of Islam, the removal of the evil of Saddam and Israel from the Islamic countries, a long life for the imam of the ummah, heavenly reward for the martyrs and patience and forebearance for their families.

Iran Calls For Expulsion of Iraq From IAEA

LD201229 Tehran IRNA in English 1140 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA — In a letter to the head of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran said the inaction of this organization in the face of repeated Iraqi attacks against Iran's atomic power plant in the city of Bushehr, in southern Iran, had "encouraged the aggressive actions of the Iraqi regime".

The letter, sent by the head of Iran's atomic energy organization, said the inability of the International Atomic Energy Agency to implement its own resolutions had served as encouragement for the aggressions of the Iraqi regime.

It listed Iraqi air attacks against Bushehr nuclear power plant and asked the head of the IAEA to offer explanation for its inaction for the benefit of "all the independent member countries of IAEA who one day might find themselves in a position similar to Iran's."

The letter concludes by asking the secretary general of the IAEA to arrange for the expulsion of Iraq from the agency. "Such an action on your part would discourage other aggressor countries who might be encouraged through your inaction in the face of the Iraqi regime and who might plan to attack the nuclear facilities of their neighbouring countries".

Ambassador in Bonn on Rocket Attack on Baghdad

LD201411 Hamburg DPA in German 1315 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Bonn, 20 Mar (DPA) — Mohamed Djavad Salari, the Iranian ambassador in Bonn, threatened rocket attacks on Baghdad airport today if Iraq continues to treat Iranian airspace as a war zone. Salari further announced increased Iranian air reprisals if the Iraqis do not immediately cease their rocket and bomb attacks on civilian targets. However, Iran wants to spare the population as much as possible, in contrast to Iraq.

At a press conference the ambassador said that the Iraqi air war against the civilian population has claimed 1,123 dead and 3,893 injured in the period from 4-17 March. In the city of Dezful alone 150 rockets have come down. Thus the overall number of victims of Iraqi rockets and bombs have increased to 6,000 dead and 29,000 injured among the population.

The ambassador confirmed that his country holds fast to the condition that Saddam Husayn, Iraq's head of state, should be put before an international tribunal and condemned as an aggressor as a precondition for taking up negotiations to end the war. He described Husayn as a tool of both superpowers, who has conspired "to destroy an unwanted movement in the Islamic world." This is alarming for all small nations who are intent on their nonalignment.

In response to the question how long Iran intends to continue the struggle, in spite of a fundamental willingness to negotiate by Iraq, the ambassador indicated that Tehran is waiting for internal upheavals in Iraq. His government will welcome it, if there is a coup in Iraq along the lines of the Islamic revolution in Iran, Salari said. "Economically we can sustain this war for a long time to come."

Besharati Comments on End of Fighting on Fronts

HK201605 Hong Kong AFP in English 1556 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] New Delhi, March 20 (Afp) — Iran is prepared to end attacks on civilian areas and stop fighting on all fronts in the Gulf war if Iraq is prepared to do the same, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said here today.

Mr Besharati, acting as the envoy of Iranian President 'Ali Khamene'i, spoke at a press conference here as two special envoys of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi left for visits to Iraq and Iran.

The trip by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Khurshid Alam Khan and Foreign Secretary Romesh Bhandari was undertaken as part of an Indian initiative within the Nonaligned Movement to resolve the 54-month-old war.

Mr Gandhi, who chairs the Nonaligned Movement, wrote recently to Iraqi President Saddam Husayn and to Mr Khamene'i, appealing for an end to the fighting, a Foreign Office spokesman here said.

Although nonaligned countries are split over the war, there has been widespread concern over the recent escalation in fighting, including the bombing of civilian areas.

By sending the envoys to both capitals, the Indian Government hopes first to obtain a pledge that bombardments of cities and towns will stop, a Foreign Ministry source said.

Efforts will then be undertaken to try to reach a negotiated end to the war, he said.

The Indian envoys will meet with President Husayn during their stay in the Iraqi capital.

It was not immediately clear when they would leave for Tehran.

Two other Indian envoys from the Foreign Ministry are already in the two capitals, where they arrived Sunday.

Mr Besharati, meanwhile, arrived here yesterday and immediately delivered a message from Mr Khamene'i to Mr Gandhi.

At the press conference today, the Iranian envoy refused to disclose the contents of the message, saying only that it had no connection with the mission of Mr Alam Khan and Mr Bhandari.

On the Gulf war, Mr Besharati charged that Iran [as received] had been the first to start shelling civilian zones.

He also said Iran had appealed to UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar and the Nonaligned Movement to pressure Iraq into stopping its attacks on Iranian residential areas, and what he termed its use of chemical weapons in the war.

Victims of Chemical Weapons To Go to Belgium

AU201922 Paris AFP in English 1914 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Brussels, March 20 (AFP) — A number of Iranian soldiers suffering severe chemical weapons burns will arrive in Belgium for treatment in the next few days, hospital sources said at Gent today. They will be treated at a hospital in Gent, west of Brussels.

A year ago, five Iranian soldiers were treated for chemical weapons burns in Belgium, one of whom died. Tests on the soldiers discovered traces of mustard gas and mycotoxin, known as "yellow rain".

A Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman confirmed that the Iranian ambassador in Brussels had asked the Belgian authorities to treat wounded from the Iran-Iraq war, and that Belgium had agreed to receive the patients on humanitarian grounds.

(In Teheran, Iranian doctors said they had treated troops suffering the effects of a new cyanide-based gas against which gas masks were useless.

(Iran has appealed for urgent action by the United Nations to prevent further use of combat gas in the four-and-a-half-year old Gulf war, but has warned that if Iraq will not stop using gas, then Iran will use it too.

(Iraq has consistently denied violating an international ban on the use of poison gas.)

Reportage on Combat Activities, War Results

Khatami Conducts Memorial

LD201225 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Today the body of the martyr Haj Ebrahim (Ja'Farzadeh), the commander of Al-Ghadir brigade of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, together with the bodies of a number of other martyrs of the victorious Badr operations were buried with the glorious participation of various strata of the people of Esfahan.

Also a memorial meeting was held in Hazireh mosque in Yazd by Ayatollah Khatami, the representative of the imam and the Friday imam of Yazd, for the commander of Al-Ghadir brigade who was martyred.

POW's Transferred to Tehran

LD201457 Tehran IRNA in English 1355 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA — Hundreds of recently-captured Iraqi POW's were transfered to Tehran by train in the early afternoon hours of Wednesday [20 March]. They were taken prisoners during the recent Iranian offensive inside the southern parts of Iraq's Al-'Amarah Province.

Arriving at Tehran's main railway station, the Iraqi POW's disembarked while shouting slogans like "death to Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi president", and "death to America".

Iranian forces started their latest military action named "the Badr Operation" Monday March 11th and have killed more than 12,000 Iraqi troops, capturing more than 3,000 of them, among them many officers.

POW Ismail Ibrahim said as he arrived in Tehran that he had been in the Iraqi Army from 1973 to 1979 and after that he had been in the warfrants "because the army is faced with an acute shortage of manpower."

Ibrahim said in Iran's Badr operation, his commanding officer had been killed and many of his fellow troops had been captured.

Another POW, Ra'd Faraj Qasim, said he was a construction worker and that if he had refused to enter the army, he would have been executed.

Jabid Kazem said there was deep discontent in the ranks of the [words indistinct] is preferential treatment for those troops who belong to the Ba'th party and other military personnel do not like this.

The POW's were taken by bus through the streets of Tehran to a camp where they will be staying.

Joint Staff Communique

LD201750 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1615 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] The Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran, while offering new year congratulations in a communique to Imam Khomeyni, leader of the Revolution and commander in chief of the Armed Forces, and the ever-present-on-the-scene ummah, announced: During the past day, military regions and installations of the Iraqi cities of Basra, Khanaqin, Mandali, Beydarvaz, Khurmal, Sayyid Sadiq, and Sham Nadiri received intense artillery fire from the mighty combatants of Islam. According to this report, during exchanges of fire on the northwestern operational fronts the retaliatory fire of our forces set ablaze an ammunition depot of the Iraqi forces in the region on the opposite side of Marivan and at least 10 enemy troops were either killed or wounded.

Our brave gendarmerie warriers on the banks of Arvand Rud killed or wounded about 10 Iraqi troops and set fire to four of their observation posts.

Thanks to our air defense units' firing and tactics of the Air force of the Islamic Republic of Iran fighter planes, this morning's air attacks by the intruding Iraqi planes on the cities of Bakhtaran and Esfahan were repulsed, and further air aggressions of the enemy on other border regions of our Islamic homeland were forcefully prevented.

Iraqi Planes Over Tehran

LD201833 Tehran IRNA in English 1831 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA — Minutes before the beginning of the new Iranian year at 19:43 local time (16:13 GMT), Iraqi planes violated the airspace of Tehran.

Electricity went off in the city immediately and the anti-aircraft fire of the Islamic defenders forced the enemy planes to flee before carrying out any operation.

Badr Operations' Success Noted

LD201848 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Excerpts] In an interview today, one of the operational commanders of Khatam ol-Anbiya Headquarters described as completely successful the victorious Badr operations carried out around Tigris to destroy enemy forces and respond decisively to the Iraqi regime's attacks on the populated centers of our country.

He said: During the Badr operations the combatants of Islam suceeded in penetrating deep into the core of the enemy's fortified positions and inflicting the heaviest blows at the forces of the Baghdad regime. As proof that we achieved the predetermined targets, around 3,000 Iraqi officers, NCO's and soldiers were captured by Islam's forces, and over 12,000 casualties were inflicted on the Zionist enemy.

Commenting on the extensive enemy propaganda and the Baghdad regime's allegations of defeating the Islamic forces in the Badr operations, the military commander said: Such allegations by Iraq are nothing new, the enemy has always had such ridiculous publicity drives. We have constantly observed publicity onslaughts of this sort throughout the imposed war, which have been aided by the news imperialism for the sake of covering up the Iraqi regime's mistakes.

The military commander of Khatam ol-Anbiya added: At present, the forces of Islam are fortifying and solidifying the captured positions and have full superiority over the area. The enemy efforts to regain this area have ended in defeat.

Finally, having mentioned the list of the enemy brigades and divisions wiped out by the forces of Islam, he said:

During these operations, hundreds of tanks and armored personnel carriers of the enemy were burned. A considerable number of tanks, APC's, and vehicles, as well as various guns, radar, and other enemy hardware have been captured intact, and are now being used against them.

Civilians Injured in Air Raid

LD201901 Tehran IRNA in English 1845 GMT 20 Mar 85

["Two Injured in Iraqi Bombardment of Bakhtaran" — IRNA headline]

[Text] Tehran, March 20, IRNA — Two civilians were injured today as two Iraqi jet fighters flew over the city at 09:45 hours (06:15 GMT) and hit several points with their bombs.

Meanwhile, invading Iraqi jets broke the sound barrier over the city of Islamabad-e Gharb, in Bakhtaran Province, and the city of Esfahan, in Esfahan Province, Wednesday morning.

Also an enemy violation of Hamadan airspace in Hamadan Province Wednesday morning was foiled and the intruding Iraqi warplanes were forced to flee without succeeding in their targets.

Patrol on Bakhtaran Front

LD202001 Tehran IRNA in English 1926 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Bakhtaran, March 20, IRNA — A patrol unit of the combatant tribal forces in a Bakhtaran front on Tuesday, destroyed two enemy personnel-carrying vehicles.

Also the Iranian fire on enemy fortifications and positions in Sumar, Qasr-e Shirin and Meymak destroyed 15 enemy bunkers and two observation posts. A total of 47 Iraqi troops were killed in these operations.

Attack on Khark Island

LD201733 Kuwait KUNA in English 1641 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Kuwait, March 20 (KUNA) — Iran's main oil supply Khark Island terminal was attacked Wednesday by apparently

Iraqi warplanes as six people were killed on board an Iranian supply vessel in a seemingly Iraqi missile attack, shipping sources said.

The sources said the terminal in the northern part of the Gulf did not sustain any damage as a result of the morning air raid, not yet announced by Iraq.

The sources noted that two supertankers were loading crude oil at the time of the raid.

The missile attack started blaze aboard the supply vessel named *Bargir*, the sources said but did not give further details except that six people were killed.

Iraq usually announced its attacks on foreign ships serving khark and other Iranian ports.

Missile Hits Ba'th Headquarters

LD202116 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] According to an IRNA report the main office of the ruling Ba'th Party in Iraq has been severely damaged as a result of a strike by the fourth missile launched by the Islamic forces toward Baghdad. Although the Iraqi Government authorities have devoted their entire efforts towards establishing a total press censorship in order to prevent the publication of any news in connection with the casualties resulting from the strikes at Baghdad by long-range missiles of the Islamic Army, diplomats resident in Baghdad have said that the fourth missile to be launched toward Baghdad has killed at least 11 people. REUTER, quoting diplomats and communicating to the world the report on the death of 11 Iraqis, made no reference whatsoever to the identity of the killed and did not say what position they had held in the ruling Iraqi Ba'th Party.

Iraqi Muslims Score Successes

LD202149 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 2030 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Text] Iraqi Muslim revolutionaries, in an attack on the army of Saddam's Zionist regime, based in the Nalih Kordan region, inflicted heavy damage on the army of that country and captured two majors of the Armed Forces.

According to the Central News Unit, the Iraqi Muslim revolutionaries, during a recent engagement with the Zionist forces based in the Nalih Kordan region, killed 60 of them and captured two majors of the army of that country and took three mortars as booty.

Reports from inside Iraq indicate that, following the activities of the Muslim Iraqi revolutionaries, the ruling regime in that country shelled the area at random and caused the martyrdom of six innocent people. According to another report, the Iraqi regime, in retaliation for the activities of the Muslim revolutionaries and in order to foment fear, shelled the villages of (Qazi-Oveh), (Garmakeh,) and (Timsar) in Iraqi Kordestan, justifying their attack with the excuse that the residents of these villages had cooperated with Muslim Iraqi revolutionaries.

Tabriz on Success of Operations

GF201910 Tabriz Domestic Service in Armenian 1730 GMT 20 Mar 85

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpt] Last Tuesday on 12 March, the forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran began an operation called Badr in response to the Iraqi regime's attacks on residential areas and to strike at the Iraqi invading forces. They achieved great successes. In these operations, which began and are continuing against the Iraqi regime's infantry and mechanized forces in the eastern part of Tigris, to date 4,600 Iraqi soldiers have been killed or wounded and 1,019 Iraqi prisoners have been transported to the [word indistinct] of the fronts including a number of Iraqi commanders as well as the commander of the 65th brigade of the Iraqi Special Forces. The Iranian forces made progress on the fronts of the imposed war despite the strong Iraqi fortifications.

The successes achieved by the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Badr operations once again showed that the initiative on all fronts is in the hands of the Iranian forces and that the marvelous victories further displayed the incapability and weakness of the Iraqi regime's army. The operations on the battlefronts of the imposed war, the sudden attack of the Iranian forces, and the incapability and hopelessness of the Iraqi regime, have forced the foreign minister of that regime, Mikhail Yuhana 'Aziz, during his visit to France and meeting with French President Mitterrand and one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council, to demand the adoption of certain measures to end the war. The political activity of the Iraqi regime, which in general is taking place after the successful attack of the Islamic Republic of Iran, is a sign of the incapability of the Iraqi regime to confront the Iranian forces.

Dezful, Hamadan Attacked

GF210606 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] According to a report from the Central News Unit from Ahvaz, the Iraqi regime, in continuation of its aggression against the residential areas in Iran, fired two missiles at Dezful last night at 2330 [2000 GMT]. Similarly, reports from Hamadan say that at about 0100 this morning Iraqi aircraft bombarded three points outside the city of Hamadan. Fortunately there was no loss of life.

Staff Communique No 2048

GF210710 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] The joint staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic in its communique 2048 announced that on 18 March the Islamic combatants pounded the military and economic installations of Basra, Khanaqin, Mandali, (Biyareh), Khawrah, Sayyid

Salim, and Sham Nadiri in Iraq and inflicted considerable losses on these installations. According to the same announcement, the Islamic combatants' fire on the opposite side of the Marivan region blew up an enemy ammunition dump and at least 10 enemy aggressors were killed or wounded. Similarly, Islamic forces at the fronts opposite Sumar, Qasr-e Shirin, and (Kan-e Shaykh) identified and opened fire on enemy patrols forcing them to flee the battlefield. At the southern fronts in the (Nakh-Ambar) region and the islands of Majnun and (Kuft), fire was exchanged between the Islamic forces and the enemy invaders and considerable losses were inflicted on the Zionist army of Iraq. Last night's communique of the joint staff of the Army of the Islamic Republic of Iran adds that as a result of the fire of the Islamic combatants on the aggressive Iraqi forces on that side of the Arvand Rud, about 10 enemy troops were killed and wounded and four observation posts were destroyed.

Correspondent Reports Battle Situation

GF210830 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] In connection with the victorious Badr operations, our correspondent has sent the following report from Ahvaz. Your attention is invited to this. [Begin unidentified correspondent's recording] On the western front in the Hawr al-Hawizah region, which is totally under the control of the Islamic Army, we can see the bodies of dead Iraqi soldiers and officers floating in the water. It is rumored at the front that some of them are Egyptian and Jordanian soldiers who were engaged in the Iraqi war in Iraqi Army uniforms. Widescale efforts by the enemy to bring under its control the strategic Khandaq highway have failed and a number of enemy tanks and other military hardware have been destroyed. The proud standard of the Islamic Republic is flying on the central (Torabeh) military post building and the enemy dares not attack this post. So far the Iraqi Army has not been able to regroup itself at the southern fronts, although it is equipped with the most modern arms and has in its possession the latest war technology. The Iraqi Air Force, which is equipped with MIG-25s and Mirages equipped with Super Etendard missiles, tries to bolster the weakening morale of its land forces. Iraqi officers suffer from a lack of confidence in their own strength. Even with its T-72 tanks and their complicated defense system, Iraq has not been able to resolve the difficulties facing its almost destroyed army. According to military experts, the hasty visit of Husni Mubarak and King Husayn to Baghdad took place due to this situation. They have given unlimited aid to Iraq as far as aircraft and military equipment is concerned. In widespread cooperation, Jordan has practically placed its army at the disposal of the Iraqi Army. Both these countries, in consultation with Israel and with its aid, have taken these steps. It is on this account that Israeli diplomacy has seemingly supported this visit. The visit of Husni Mubarak to Baghdad has strengthened the rumors that Egyptian military advisers and security officials of Israel are in Iraq and are in the service of the Saddam regime. The Iraqi, Egyptian, and Jordanian axis is believed deeply involved in the Iraqi war against the Islamic revolution of Iran. The morale of the Islamic forces is high. The slogan "God Is Great and Khomeyni Is the Leader" fills the air at the battlefronts. An Esfahani (?soldier) told our correspondent: We are victorious in this war, we are victorious in this war which has been imposed on us. We know that world imperialism is our enemy and we know that the United States is fighting against us behind the mask of Iraq. But we will be victorious even if this epic-creating war lasts 20 years. [end recording]

Official Denies Aircraft Downed

LD211058 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] According to an IRNA report, an informed official at the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran today strongly rebutted the Iraqi regime's claim to have hit and downed a fighter aircraft of the Iranian Air Force.

Iraq Bombs Ilam

LD211112 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] In continued violation of our country's air space over cities by aircraft of the Iraqi regime, at 1025 this morning a number of enemy aircraft subjected a few populated centers in the city of Ilam to bombing from the air, and as a result a number of the city's inhabitants have either been martyred or wounded, and a number of housing units have been damaged. Aggressive Iraqi aircraft at various times last night entered city air spaces to bomb the cities of Qazvin, Zanjan, Khorramabad, Arak, Tabriz, Sanandaj, Sardasht, Piranshah, Urumiyeh, Nahavand, and Tuysarkan, but before carrying out any operations they were driven away thanks to antiaircraft fire.

Groups Depart for Battlefronts

GF210954 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 21 Mar 85

[Text] According to the Central News Unit, more than 2,000 mobilization and Islamic Revolution Guards Corps personnel have left for the battlefronts from various cities of Khorasan Province amid warm send-offs from the people of Mashhad. Similarly, 2,000 brave men of the Islamic Guards who have undergone their military training left for the war regions of the country after special ceremonies at their headquarters. Another 1,700 mobilization personnel of the Labbeyk ya Khomeyni plan who volunteered to be sent back to the fronts and some persons having specialities in various trades from Mazandaran Province left for the battlefronts from Martyr Raja'i base at Chalus. A large number of persons who loved Hoseyni Karbala have left for the battlefronts from the provinces of Gilan, Esfahan, Khuzestan, Hormozgan, Kohkiluyeh va Boyer Ahmad, and Bushehr and the townships of Yazd, Nishapur, Borujerd, Karaj, Najafabad, Kazerun, Gonbad, Ilam, Tangestan, Rafsanjan, Qom, Kashan, Khorramabad, and Semnan. A report from Qom says that in response to the call by the Supreme Assembly of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq yesterday afternoon, a third group of Iraqi brothers residing in Qom left for the front of light against darkness after performing special ceremonies and chanting crushing revolutionary slogans.